

(*Washington*) – Today **Congressman John B. Larson** released the following statement after President Barack Obama delivered his annual State of the Union Address:

"Tonight President Obama confirmed his commitment to creating jobs and growing the economy. The President's focus on jobs and the economy, as well as his emphasis on infrastructure and manufacturing is important to Connecticut and the constituents of the First Congressional District. This has been my focus, and will continue to be my focus because there is nothing more important than the simple dignity that comes from a job.

"I am thankful that the President remains committed to addressing the issue of gun violence in a comprehensive manner. Many of us invited victims of gun violence to tonight's State of the Union address; I was honored to bring Ross Hollander, President of Hartford Distributors in Manchester. On August 3, 2010, Ross and his family experienced one of the worst tragedies the first district has ever seen as eight employees of Hartford Distributors were shot and killed and two were injured in a senseless, horrific act of violence. And I couldn't have been more proud that the President used his State of the Union speech to call on Congress to finally vote on common sense approaches to addressing gun violence. It's time we stand up for the victims of Newtown, Manchester, Aurora, Chicago, and Tucson. We owe them nothing less.

"Further, as the newly-appointed Chairman of the Task Force on Election Reform, I appreciated the President's remarks about long lines at the polls, and his willingness to take a stand against other forms of voter suppression we saw across the country. I am glad that President Obama has acknowledged that we must take immediate steps to reform our broken system of elections, and I look forward to working with the President and members of Congress to address these injustices."

"I am also pleased that the President announced the withdrawal of 34,000 troops. Ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has been a longtime commitment of mine, and I am pleased at this step to bring our men and women home.

"No member of Congress can deny the need to hasten our recovery. It is my sincere hope that, based on some encouraging words from the Republican leadership, they are prepared to work with the President to put the country back to work. That's what the American people want, that's what we need, and that's where my efforts will be focused."

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